

Project Update: March 2022

Long-term research and conservation interventions on coexistence between people and large wildlife (elephants and leopards) have yielded positive results in the tea plantations of north-eastern India. The proposed project is scaling up the conservation efforts to the greater landscape using learning from our past studies and conservation actions.

We have expanded our leopard monitoring protocol to the protected areas in the landscape and we have already carried out camera trapping in Gorumara National Park, Chapramari Wildlife Sanctuary, and Jalpaiguri Division Forests. The exercise inside the forests was conducted in collaboration with the West Bengal Forest Department. We are continuing the monitoring and estimation of leopard numbers from the tea plantations. We have already completed sampling of the 368 km² study landscape with a total trap effort of 1200 trap nights and we are currently logging and analysing the data to get the final leopard estimates.

We have started the formation of Quick Response Teams to respond to any leopard emergencies in the tea estates. We have already visited 20 tea estates during awareness and interaction sessions, and we have obtained the list of volunteers for the programme. However, due to the pandemic crisis, our movement and interactions with the tea estate workers were severely restricted. We hope to complete the formation of the team in the next 6 months as the pandemic restrictions ease out.

We are continuing the monitoring of elephant movement in our study area using satellite telemetry and camera trap-based monitoring.





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